Text: China should spray sulfate aerosols into the stratosphere. I reserve the right to clarify.

The counter-plan solves warming and prioritizes resource extraction over environmental protection.

**Edney and Symons 13** write[[1]](#footnote-1)

**SRM techniques, such as dispersing sulphate particles in the stratosphere** to reflect solar energy, **would allow the global climate to be cooled** relatively cheaply**, albeit with** significant **environmental drawbacks** (Barrett 2008; Goes, Tuana and Keller 2011). Many technologically advanced states probably already possess the capacity to implement SRM unilaterally, atmospheric SRM research is occurring (SPICE 2011) and **we know from natural volcanic events that aerosols can lower global temperatures**. Geoengineering is also rapidly gaining diplomatic attention. In late 2010 the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) announced that geoengineering would be covered in that organization’s Fifth Assessment Report (2014), while a non-binding partial moratorium was negotiated at the tenth UN meeting of parties to the Convention on Biodiversity (2010). In addition to creation of ‘SRMGI’ as a collaborative governance initiative, awareness of the implications of geoengineering has also prompted calls for a cooperative international research program, for negotiation of a global agreement governing geoengineering research and implementation (UK House of Commons 2010; Victor 2011: 190- 6), and activist demands for a complete moratorium (ETC Group 2011). Since international discussion of geoengineering governance is only just beginning and there is as yet no binding international law constraining SRM, **there is no legal or practical barrier to a technologically capable state unilaterally initiating** a **SRM** program. SRM has the potential to transform the politics of negotiations among parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), because **these technologies might allow** some **adverse impacts of climate change to be avoided without limiting GHG emissions.** At present, **constraining** GHG **emissions** necessarily also **constrains short-term** economic **growth. This is because carbon dioxide**, which is the key driver of climate change, **is released by** the chemical process through which combustion of **fossil fuels** generates energy. The tight link between economic growth and energy use creates a dilemma for high-growth economies. Policy-makers might therefore be tempted to view SRM as a substitute for control of emissions. Analysts commonly stress that SRM is a flawed option that should be subject to international governance and utilised only in the event of sudden, dangerous climatic change. However, states’ enthusiasm for substituting SRM for traditional emissions abatement is likely to vary with their perceived vulnerability to climate change, willingness to sacrifice economic growth, and attitudes to human manipulation of the natural environment. Some analysts fear China or another state may already be experimenting with SRM with a view to possible unilateral action (Victor 2011: 192; Hamilton 2013: 138-157). David Victor (2011: 196) writes that: Governance in geoengineering is a race between the slow, bottom-up essential process of conducting research and crafting usable norms and the blunt temptations for some countries to geoengineer on their own without regard for the side effects. **China** may be unusually susceptible to the ‘blunt temptations’ of geoengineering: it is politically dependent on maintaining rapid economic growth, conceptualizes climate change as a form of environmental imperialism, **is a self-proclaimed leader of developing countries and possesses a large landmass and** unrivaled **existing weather manipulation program that would enable unilateral implemention of SRM** (UK House of Commons 2010: EV 34). Moreover, China has long resisted binding legal environmental obligations, for example by refusing to sign the 1977 ‘Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques.’ For these reasons China, which is already an indispensible player in international climate negotiations, is also likely to become vital to the regulation of geoengineering. At the same time as Chinese leaders place paramount importance on preserving economic growth, they also appear to be genuinely concerned about the impacts of climate change—particularly for water supplies and agricultural production (NDRC 2007). It follows that Chinese officials might view SRM as an economically advantageous path through which climate change impacts (such as sea level rise and melting of the Himalayan glaciers) might be limited. The very prospect of geoengineering carries the potential to influence UNFCCC negotiations by changing China’s risk-perception, which may in turn alter its negotiating strategy. China’s developing response to geoengineering is consequently already of significant practical import.

## AT Tech Fails

Authors that oppose tech concede that geoengineering is key.

**Boyd 13** writes[[2]](#footnote-2)

Clive Hamilton: The dilemma is that as long as the world responds in a feeble way to the warnings of the scientists, **we’re likely to end up in a situation where we** will be **cast**ing **around for desperate solutions and** I think that’s when **the world will turn seriously to geoengineering** interventions to get us out of the impossible fix. **People who are** deeply concerned about the climate crisis, and naturally **sceptical about** major **tech**nological **interventions, are nonetheless saying this is something we’re going to have to pursue.** I’m thinking in particular of [atmospheric chemist] Paul **Crutzen** who has been vital in this whole debate – someone who with a very heavy heart has **concluded that the world has been so derelict in responding to** the **scientific warnings that we’re going to have to pursue** this deeply unpalatable alternative, **this Plan B.**

1. Kingsley Edney (Lecturer in Politics and International Relations of China at the University

   of Leeds) and Jonathan Symons (Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at Macquarie

   University, Sydney). “China and the blunt temptations of geoengineering: the role of solar radiation

   management in China’s strategic response to climate change.” The Pacific Review. 2013. <https://www.academia.edu/1983811/China_and_the_blunt_temptations_of_geoengineering_the_role_of_solar_radiation_management_in_Chinas_strategic_response_to_climate_change> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Olivia Boyd (journalist and editor, studied Chinese at Oxford University). “China could move first to geoengineer the climate.” China Dialogue. April 30th, 2013. <https://www.chinadialogue.net/article/show/single/en/5952-China-could-move-first-to-geoengineer-the-climate> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)